

# Notes on *Gonepteryx cleopatra* Linnaeus 1767 (Lepidoptera: Pieridae) in Greece

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*Gonepteryx cleopatra* Linnaeus does not seem to be widespread in the Balkans. It is rare in Albania (Rebel & Zerny, 1931) and in Yugoslavian Macedonia (Thurner, 1964). It is not known from any other part of the Balkans, except for Greece, and Thurner (*loc. cit.*) has suggested that *G. cleopatra* is not endemic to the northern Balkans because of the absence of its foodplant (*Rhamnus alpina* Linnaeus). In Greece, this insect is widely scattered, flying on Mt. Taygetos, Mt. Chelmos, Mt. Parnassos, Mt. Olympos, Mt. Pilion, Mt. Cholomon and the southern Pindos at 1,200 m., and in the area of Argos. It flies in July and August.

The Greek subspecies of *G. cleopatra* is similar to *G.c. cleopatra* in the male, except that the underside of the hindwing of Greek specimens has a yellowish green ground colour. However, the females of the Greek insect are remarkable; the ground colour of the female is yellow. The hindwings are often deep lemon yellow, slightly flushed orange. The forewing is paler. The females of *G. cleopatra* from Mt. Chelmos seem universally bright yellow, the females from Mt. Taygetos show a low frequency of a paler form and the females from the southern Pindos show the paler form in about 50% of individuals. The paler form differs significantly from the bright yellow form but is still pale yellow. Thus, the proportions of the bright and paler forms seem to vary locally.

In its yellow females, the Greek subspecies of *G. cleopatra* resembles *G.c. fiiori* Turati & Fiori. The Greek subspecies differs from this Rhodian endemic in its smaller size, less rounded wings and slightly paler female ground colour. The similar populations of Rhodes and the Peloponnesos are separated in the south by what is a distinct subspecies in Crete, in which the female is small and white. Thus, the Peloponnesian subspecies might not be consubspecific with *G.c. fiiori* unless it is joined to the Rhodian population by intermediate populations in N. Greece and W. Turkey. Certainly, *G. cleopatra* occurs on the Dalmatian coast as the subspecies *G.c. italica* Gerhardt but our present knowledge suggests that *G. cleopatra* is absent from N. Greece and W. Turkey.

## References

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